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DOCKET NO. MDFH01-00004
U.S. SERIAL NO. 10/683,571
PATENT

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

Claims 1-20 (Cancelled).

21. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:
determining, at a first mobile device capable of operating within a tracking system, a position of the first mobile device;
transmitting, from the first mobile device to a central monitoring system associated with the tracking system, first position information associated with the first mobile device;
relaying, from the first mobile device directly to the central monitoring system, second position information associated with a second mobile device; and
switching a mode of operation of the first mobile device such that the first mobile device (i) transmits the first position information to at least one of the second mobile device and a third mobile device for relaying to the central monitoring system and (ii) stops relaying the second position information directly to the central monitoring system.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, wherein the relaying of the second position information to the central monitoring system by the first mobile device occurs when the second mobile device is within a threshold distance of the first mobile device.

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23. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the second mobile device is capable of transmitting the second position information directly to the central monitoring system when the second mobile device is not within the threshold distance of the first mobile device.

24. (Currently Amended) A tracking system, comprising:
a central monitoring system; and
a first mobile device capable of:
determining a position of the first mobile device;
transmitting to the central monitoring system first position information associated with the first mobile device;
relaying directly to the central monitoring system second position information associated with a second mobile device; and
switching a mode of operation of the first mobile device such that the first mobile device (i) transmits the first position information to at least one of the second mobile device and a third mobile device for relaying to the central monitoring system and (ii) stops relaying the second position information directly to the central monitoring system.

25. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 24, wherein the first mobile device is capable of relaying the second position information to the central monitoring system when the second mobile device is within a threshold distance of the first mobile device.

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26. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 25, wherein the second mobile device is capable of transmitting the second position information directly to the central monitoring system when the second mobile device is not within the threshold distance of the first mobile device.

27. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 25, wherein a value of the threshold distance is static.

28. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 25, wherein a value of the threshold distance is dynamic.

29. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 24, wherein at least one of the first and second mobile devices comprises a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit.

30. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 24, wherein at least one of the first and second mobile devices comprises a transceiver capable of receiving signals from an RF transponder.

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31. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 24, wherein the central monitoring system is capable of monitoring one or more positions of at least one of the first and second mobile devices while the at least one of the first and second mobile devices is within a defined geographical boundary.

32. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 24, wherein the central monitoring system comprises a first base station and a second base station each capable of receiving a beacon signal from the first mobile device.

33. (Previously Presented) The tracking system of Claim 32, wherein the central monitoring system is capable of determining the position of the first mobile device using a triangulation algorithm that uses the beacon signal received from the first mobile device by the first base station and the second base station.

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34. (Currently Amended) A mobile device, comprising:
a position determining unit capable of determining a position of the first mobile device; and
at least one transceiver capable of:
transmitting, to a central monitoring system, first position information associated with
the mobile device;
relaying directly to the central monitoring system second position information
associated with a second mobile device; and
after a mode of operation of the mobile device has switched, (i) transmitting the first
position information to at least one of the second mobile device and a third mobile device for
relaying to the central monitoring system and (ii) stopping the relaying of the second position
information directly to the central monitoring system

35. (Previously Presented) The mobile device of Claim 34, wherein the at least one
transceiver is capable of relaying the second position information to the central monitoring system
when the second mobile device is within a threshold distance of the first mobile device.

36. (Previously Presented) The mobile device of Claim 35, wherein the second
mobile device is capable of transmitting the second position information directly to the central
monitoring system when the second mobile device is not within the threshold distance of the first
mobile device.

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37. (Previously Presented) The mobile device of Claim 34, wherein the position determining unit comprises a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit.

38. (Previously Presented) The mobile device of Claim 34, wherein the position determining unit comprises a transceiver capable of receiving signals from an RF transponder.

39. (Previously Presented) The mobile device of Claim 38, wherein the at least one transceiver is capable of transmitting identification information associated with the RF transponder to the central monitoring system.

40. (Previously Presented) The mobile device of Claim 34, wherein the at least one transceiver is capable of transmitting a beacon signal to a plurality of base stations associated with the central monitoring system.

41. (Cancelled).

42. (New) The method of Claim 21, further comprising:
transmitting, from the first mobile device to the central monitoring system, a beacon signal only when the first mobile device cannot determine its location.